

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

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DRAFTED BY NEA/IAI:WBSMITH;DJB

APPROVED BY NEA:ALATHERTON

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P 120205Z SEP 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 217219

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:OGEN IS

SUBJECT: TEL AVIV PRESS CABLE

FOR AMBASSADOR FROM ATHERTON

1. IN MEETING YESTERDAY WITH USIA AT WHICH TEL AVIV PAO MOSS WAS PRESENT, WE LEARNED THAT USIS TEL AVIV HAS RECOMMENDED REDUCTION IN FREQUENCY OF TEL AVIV PRESS CABLE TO TWO OR THREE DAYS A WEEK AND A MARKED SHORTENING OF THIS CABLE ON DAYS WHEN IT IS SENT, THAT YOU HAVE CONCURRED, AND THAT USIA HAS APPROVED. USIA REP AND MOSS EXPLAINED THAT FIVE DAY SUBMISSION OF THIS REPORT IN LENGTHY FORM WAS NEVER NEEDED FOR USIA PURPOSES. FSL SALARY COSTS HAD MOUNTED TO POINT WHERE THIS, PLUS USIS TEL AVIV TELEGRAPHIC SHARED COSTS COVERING PRESS CABLE TRANSMISSION, MEANT EXPENDITURE OF SEVERAL THOUSAND DOLLARS PER ANNUM WHICH USIS NEEDED FOR ITS REGULAR PROGRAMS.

2. WE NEED TO CONTINUE RECEIVING THIS DETAILED REPORT AS BEFORE FOR FOLLOWING REASONS.
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A. LEAKS BY ISRAELI AUTHORITIES TO ISRAELI PRESS OF ACCURATE OR SEMI-ACCURATE STORIES ON SENSITIVE US-ISRAELI MATTERS GET PICKED UP BY US MEDIA AND ALSO SOMETIMES BY

ARAB GOVERNMENTS IN MATTER OF DAYS OR EVEN HOURS. YOUR PRESS CABLES ENABLE US TO BRACE IN ADVANCE FOR POLICY AND PR PROBLEMS WHICH SUCH LEAKS CAUSE.

B. CABLE ENABLES US TO KNOW IMMEDIATELY WHAT ISRAELI CORRESPONDENTS IN WASHINGTON ARE FILING, MUCH OF IT REFLECTING CURRENT LINE OF ISRAELI EMBASSY AS WELL AS VARIOUS LOBBYISTS ON HOT SUBJECTS.

C. CABLE ALSO GIVES US RUNNING CHECK, IN THOSE EXTRA SENSITIVE CASES WHERE WE HAVE MADE SPECIAL PITCH TO GOI TO HOLD INFORMATION TIGHTLY, ON DEGREE OF ISRAELI COMPLIANCE.

3. THUS THIS ROUTINE UNCLASSIFIED CABLE SERVES MUCH BROADER POLICY PURPOSE IN DEPARTMENT THAN WOULD BE APPARENT FROM EMBASSY PERSPECTIVE, AND I HOPE VERY MUCH YOU WILL AGREE TO REINSTITUTE IT RIGHT AWAY. AFTER SOME HARD BARGAINING, WE HAVE OBTAINED USIA AGREEMENT TO CONTINUE FUNDING ONE HALF FSL AND TRANSMISSION COSTS PROVIDED STATE COMPONENT WILL PICK UP OTHER HALF. KISSINGER

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